

## CLAIMS

Claims 1- 91 are pending in this applications with claims 1, 13, 40, 41, 52 and 76 being amended and claims 2 – 12, 14 – 39, 42 – 51, 53 – 60 and 63 – 72 being cancelled by this response. New claims 92 – 98 are added for consideration.

1. (Currently Amended) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product comprising:

- a) a fluid filled conk tank for separating the shellfish product from packing ice, sea shells and other such large objects;
- b) means for automatically transporting the product to said conk tank and dumping the shellfish product into said conk tank;
- c) a boiler system for supplying heated brine and cooking the shellfish product therein, said boiler system comprising:
  - i) a brine mixing tank including means for introducing water therein and means for introducing salt therein to create a brine solution of a predetermined concentration in which the shellfish product is to be cooked;
  - ii) a primary seafood boiler for retaining brine obtained from said brine mixing tank and maintaining said brine at a constant, predetermined temperature; and
  - iii) a conduit extending between said brine mixing tank and said primary seafood boiler for selectively transporting of brine to primary mixing tank; and
  - iv) at least one auxiliary boilers in line with said conduit for heating said brine to the desired temperature and storing the brine therein until called for to replenish used brine that has been removed from said primary seafood boiler; and
- d) means for automatically transferring the shellfish product from said conk tank to said boiler system
- e) at least one dryer for dehydrating the shellfish product;
- f) means for automatically transferring the shellfish product from said boiler system to said dryer;
- g) at least one peeling device for at least partially removing at least one of heads, shells and tails from the shellfish product ;

h) means for automatically transferring the dried shellfish product from said dryer into said peeling device and for removing the shellfish product therefrom;

i) a freezer device for freezing said at least partially shelled shellfish product and causing any remaining shells to become brittle; and

j) means for transferring said partially shelled shellfish product to said freezer device.

Claims 2 – 12 (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product as recited in claim 12 1, wherein said means for automatically transporting said shellfish product from the said boiler system to said dryer is a seafood dryer conveyor having a first lower end disposed at a bottom portion of said primary seafood boiler and a second end extending over and beyond an opposing sidewall of said dryer wherein said dryer conveyor has a substantially horizontal orientation and terminates upon introduction to said dryer

Claims 14 – 39 (Cancelled)

40. (Currently Amended) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product as recited in claim 39 1, wherein said peeling device further comprises at least one of:

a) means for separation of debris and shells from finished product by vacuum extraction and loading by-product into at least one of packages, drums and storage bins;

b) means connected serially between said dryer and said product transfer system for grading product by size;

c) means for auto-unloading of finished product connected to said peeler;

d) mobile tilting unit connected to said peeler for tilting said peeling device;

e) a stationary stand connected for supporting said peeler;

f) a screen sweeper positioned within said inner compartment and over said screened connected within said peeler for removing objects therefrom; and

g) a plurality of air jets positioned within said inner compartment for circulating said shellfish product therein.

41. (Currently Amended) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product as recited in claim 1, wherein said freezer device further comprising comprises an automated means for separating frozen shells and debris from a finished seafood product.

Claims 42 – 51 (Cancelled)

52. (Currently Amended) A method for processing raw seafood product comprising:

a) delivering raw seafood product to a heated receptacle having a brine solution therein;

b) heating the receptacle; ~~and~~

c) recovering heat used for heating the receptacle for later use thereof;

d) drying the processed seafood from the heated receptacle;

e) peeling the dried shellfish product using a peeling device to produce at least partially peeled shellfish product;

f) transferring partially peeled hard-shell shellfish from the peeling device to a freezer device; and

g) freezing the partially peeled hard-shell shellfish in the freezer device causing any shell still attached thereto to become brittle.

Claims 53 – 60 (Cancelled)

61. (Currently Amended) The method as recited in claim ~~60~~ 52, wherein the shellfish is a hard-shelled shellfish and said step of peeling further comprises the steps of:

- a) ~~transferring partially peeled hard-shell shellfish from the peeling device to a freezer device;~~
- b) ~~freezing the partially peeled hard-shell shellfish in the freezer device causing any shell still attached thereto to become brittle;~~
- e) further transferring the frozen partially peeled hard-shell shellfish to at least one of the peeling device and a second peeling device; and
- d) further peeling of the hard-shell shellfish to remove any remaining shell therefrom.

62. (Original) The method as recited in claim 61, wherein said step of freezing results in hard-shell shellfish meat that has a greater durability and allows for a greater yield in final product.

Claims 63 – 72 (Cancelled)

73. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product as recited in claim 13, further comprising at least one pair of rollers positioned vertically on top of one another and having a predetermined gap therebetween, wherein said at least one pair of rollers is positioned at a distal end of said seafood dryer conveyor and prior to said at least one dryer.

74. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product as recited in claim 73, wherein said pair of rollers is able to at least one of crush and crack shells of the shellfish product passing therethrough to allow for a more efficient dehydration thereof

75. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product as recited in claim 74, wherein said at least one pair of rollers are adjustable thereby producing different sized gaps in order to accommodate a plurality of different types of shellfish therethrough.

76. (Currently Amended) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product as recited in claim 38 1, wherein said peeler partially shells the shellfish product and further comprises:

- ~~a) a freezer device for freezing said partially shelled shellfish product and causing any remaining shells to become brittle;~~
- ~~b) a first means for transferring said partially shelled shellfish product to said freezer device;~~
- e) a second means for transferring frozen partially shelled shellfish product to a further peeling device for complete removal of said remaining shells.

77. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product as recited in claim 76, wherein said further peeling device is at least one of said peeler and a second peeler device.

78. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil comprising:

- a) means for transporting raw shellfish product for processing thereof;
- b) means connected to said transporting means for cooking and dehydrating said raw shellfish product;
- c) means for peeling said cooked and dehydrated shellfish product to produce shellfish byproduct;
- d) means for using said shellfish byproduct to produce a shellfish flavored oil able to be consumed by human beings.

79. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 78, further comprising means for adding a further flavor element to said shellfish flavored oil.

80. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored as recited in claim 79, wherein said further flavor

element is at least one of a lemon flavor, garlic flavor, spice flavor, butter flavor and any other flavor element for human consumption.

81. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 78, wherein said using means comprises:

- a) a container for retaining a neutral oil therein;
- b) means for pulverizing said byproducts and for transferring said pulverized byproduct to said container thereby forming a mixture of pulverized byproduct and neutral oil;
- c) means disposed beneath said container for heating said mixture at a low heat;
- d) a filtering device for filtering said heated mixture in order to produce said shellfish flavored oil.

82. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 81, wherein said neutral oil includes at least one of Soy, Canola, Vegetable, Olive and Medium Chain Triglycerides (MCT) oil.

83. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 78, wherein said byproduct includes heads, tails, legs and shells of said shellfish that were removed by a peeling device and wherein said shellfish flavor originates from shellfish meat in cavities in each piece of byproduct.

84. (Original) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 78, wherein said filtering device is at least one of a cheesecloth and a screen formed from a fine mesh.

85. (Original) A method for producing a shellfish flavored oil comprising the steps of:

- a) transporting raw shellfish product for processing thereof;
  - b) cooking and dehydrating the raw shellfish product;
  - c) peeling the cooked and dehydrated shellfish product to produce shellfish byproduct;
  - d) pulverizing the shellfish byproduct into a powder form;
  - e) transferring the pulverized byproduct to a container having a neutral oil contained therein to form a mixture of pulverized byproduct and neutral oil;
  - f) heating the mixture in the container on a low heat for a predetermined amount of time;
  - g) extracting flavor from the pulverized byproduct into the neutral oil;
- and
- h) filtering the mixture thereby producing a shellfish flavored oil.

86. (Original) The method for producing a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 85, further comprising the step of adding a further flavor element to the shellfish flavored oil.

87. (Original) The method for producing a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 85, wherein said step of peeling further includes the step of removed at least one of a head of the shellfish, a tail of the shellfish, at least one leg of the shellfish and de-shelling the shellfish.

88. (Original) The method for producing a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 85, wherein said neutral oil includes at least one of Soy, Canola, Vegetable, Olive and Medium Chain Triglycerides (MCT) oil.

89. (Original) The method for producing a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 85, wherein said step of filter further comprises passing the mixture through at least one of a cheesecloth and a fine mesh screen.

90. (Original) The method for producing a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 85, wherein said step of pulverizing is performed in at least one of a mill and a grinder.

91. (Original) The method as recited in claim 61, wherein the hard-shell shellfish is at least one of crawfish and rock shrimp.

92. (New) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product as recited in claim 1, wherein said at least one peeler at least partially peels said shellfish product resulting in finished shellfish product and shellfish by-product, and further comprising means for using said shellfish byproduct to produce a shellfish flavored oil able to be consumed by human beings.

93. (New) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 92, further comprising means for adding a further flavor element to said shellfish flavored oil.

94. (New) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored as recited in claim 93, wherein said further flavor element is at least one of a lemon flavor, garlic flavor, spice flavor, butter flavor and any other flavor element for human consumption.

95. (New) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 92, wherein said using means comprises:

- e) a container for retaining a neutral oil therein;
- f) means for pulverizing said byproducts and for transferring said pulverized byproduct to said container thereby forming a mixture of pulverized byproduct and neutral oil;



- g) means disposed beneath said container for heating said mixture at a low heat;
- h) a filtering device for filtering said heated mixture in order to produce said shellfish flavored oil.

96. (New) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 95, wherein said neutral oil includes at least one of Soy, Canola, Vegetable, Olive and Medium Chain Triglycerides (MCT) oil.

97. (New) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 92, wherein said byproduct includes heads, tails, legs and shells of said shellfish that were removed by at least one of a peeling device and a further peeling device and wherein said shellfish flavor originates from shellfish meat in cavities in each piece of byproduct.

98. (New) Apparatus and system for cooking, drying and peeling shellfish product to produce a shellfish flavored oil as recited in claim 95, wherein said filtering device is at least one of a cheesecloth and a screen formed from a fine mesh.